

**CITY OF GLOUCESTER**  
**Community Development Department**  
**Minutes of the Meeting**  
**June 9, 2008**  
**Annisquam Village Hall**  
**16 Cambridge Avenue**  
**Gloucester, MA 01930**

**Community Forum on Gloucester Harbor**

*Mayor Carolyn Kirk* began the forum at 7:10. Forum ended at 9:10.

**PUTTING THE WORKING PORT BACK TO WORK**- *Mayor Carolyn Kirk* introduced herself to the audience and stated that she is hosting the Community Forums on Gloucester Harbor in conjunction with the City's Community Development Department and the Community Panel. She stated that this is the fourth of five community forums on Gloucester's harbor. She thanked members of the community panel and members of the community for attending the forum. She stated that on January 1, 2008, during her inaugural speech, she stated that she would put out for community discussion some scenarios around the harbor and its redevelopment within six months. She stated that she wants to make sure that the community has a chance to help shape any of the types of changes that come out of the administration. She stated that change is inevitable along the harbor but change needs to be done intentionally. She stated that she chose four scenarios because she felt the harbor plan as a whole was too big to tackle. She stated that there has been a dedicated group of folks who have looked at the harbor plan. She stated that she wants to take the focus away from zoning and look at some visuals at what might be possible. She stated that they are going to put some views out to the community to get the community's reaction and have residents ask: Is this what we want for Gloucester Harbor? What are some of the values that drive decisions? What is good public policy around the harbor?

*Mayor Carolyn Kirk* stated that the City Council has already voted to move forward on some zoning changes within the Fort area. She stated that the City Council has been gracious enough to wait until the administration gets some public input and uses the professional staff that they have in order to shape those recommendations.

*Mayor Carolyn Kirk* stated that the Planning Board has been very patient as well. She thanked Jim Duggan, Administrative Assistant to the Mayor, and Ron Geary for their work on the Gloucester Harbor vision.

*Mayor Carolyn Kirk* stated that the community panel members are advisors to the Mayor and are an impartial jury of Gloucester peers, though they will take no vote, they have to come to consensus as to where there is consensus. She stated that consensus is very important in moving forward because there has to be consensus at the local level for anything that is tackled in the Fort area. She stated that they need consensus in terms of the harbor plan, which is governed by the State. She stated that these forums are about where the community agrees where there is consensus in the community.

**COMMUNITY PANEL**

- *Tom Balf*, Environmental Energy Expert
- *Doug Cook*, Landscape Design Architect
- *Phil Cusumano*, Artist
- *Robert Foley*, Former Merchant Marine

**COMMUNITY PANEL, CON'T-**

- *Rosalyn Frontiera*, Former Waterfront Family
- *Capt. Paul Frontiero*, Owner of Seven Seas Whale Watch
- *David Marsh*, Retired Commercial Banker
- *Scott Memhard*, Owner of Cape Pond Ice
- *Reverend Fayette Severance*, Member of the Clergy

**BEGINNING THE CONVERSATION: A WALK AROUND THE HARBOR SOME VISUAL SCENARIOS FOR HARBOR DEVELOPMENT-**

*Sarah Buck*, Community Development Director and Harbor Plan Coordinator introduced herself to the audience. She stated that the purpose tonight is to hear what residents have to say about how they relate to the harbor, what the community's vision is about the harbor and what the harbor means to the community. She stated that it is important to hear what the community has to say about the harbor and try to get the themes about what the harbor means to everyone. She stated that they have a very good harbor plan that was developed over two years ago, though it lacks agreement on what will actually move the harbor forward. The harbor is going through change and it is how they shape it and let it move forward and still keep what the community feels are the most important parts of it. She stated that she will present a PowerPoint presentation and she asked that the community understand that the presentation suggests ideas not plans for the harbor.

*Ms. Buck* presented a PowerPoint presentation to the community. She stated that Cambridge Seven, an architectural firm, came up with the visions in the presentation. The presentation highlighted the following ideas and/or statements:

- Purpose: To ask people who care about the harbor to contribute to a vision that can guide decisions about its development.
- The harbor is only bringing back 1.5% of the tax revenue for the city.
- Gloucester has always relied on its harbor.
- Its about putting the working harbor back to work in the context of community values and policy
- Two regulatory ways of putting the working fort back to work, a draft master plan, which will have to go before the State for approval as well as City Council and the local zoning regulations, would be amended through the City Council.
- Purpose tonight is to ask people who care about the harbor to contribute to a vision and to guide decisions about its development through core principles.
- Four scenarios: The Fort, Harbor Cove, Waterfront Property Owners and the East Gloucester Harbor Front.
- One concept is public access and a complete harbor walk in the Harbor Cove area.
- Increased commercial use on Roger Street and preserve existing allowable water use.
- Keep dockage for commercial use in Harbor Cove area.
- Possibility of hotel in Fort area and mixed residential and commercial use.
- Recreational and commercial dockage in Waterfront Property Owners area.
- Redevelopment of AmeriCold buildings, smaller buildings in the East Gloucester Harbor Front area.
- Possible Maritime Industrial Park in East Gloucester Harbor Front area and mixing boatyards with recreational boating.

**COMMUNITY FORUM-**

*Peter Bent*, East Gloucester boat yard owner for the last thirty years, stated his property is grandfathered in from the onerous restrictions that apply to the waterfront today. He stated that none of his opinions tonight will reflect the opinion of the Gloucester Waterways Board, which he is Chairperson of. He stated that Gloucester Harbor is a Designated Port Area (DPA).

**COMMUNITY FORUM, CONT'-**

*Peter Bent* stated that a DPA can be a wonderful thing when it works. He stated that the State partners with local waterfront communities to promote profitable water dependent activities that in turn provide jobs, income and taxes. He stated that a DPA harbor lives with more rigid restrictions on the use of land that eliminates other non-water dependent uses that could function elsewhere and might be injurious to the health of those businesses that already exist there. He stated that the State gives out large grants of money when poor infrastructure needs a shot in the arm. He stated that Gloucester Harbor has received money for sea wall reconstruction, removal of vessels from the harbor bottom, dredging at the mouth of the river, a complete rebuild of the City's marina at St. Peter's square and most recently a grant to study the future of the harbor. He stated that the problem is DPA is not one size fits all. He stated that the happiest recipient of money and renovations is New Bedford, which is mostly city-owned vacant land and the worst fit is Gloucester. He stated that Gloucester's waterfront has mostly privately owned and many of these businesses originated with and depended on the fishing industry. He stated that these businesses are family owned for generations and the income revenue has decreased and the value has declined and so has the physical condition of the piers, pilings and buildings. He stated that under these restrictions and circumstances it does not seem to be a business model to turn these properties into income, job-producing sites. The city can benefit from the revenues of the port but even minor changes to the zoning can lead to disaster. He stated that in order for Gloucester Harbor to contribute as the economic center of the community they must push the State for flexibility and change in the regulations.

*Cocoa Berkman*, Gloucester resident of twenty-five years, stated that she has a more of an aesthetic view rather than an economical view. She stated that the City should prioritize the aesthetic view and not rush into big development. She encouraged the community to take risks that don't necessarily require much money such as a community garden or a public walk near the water. She stated that she does not like the idea of a hotel in the Fort area and would support bed and breakfasts in that area. She likes the idea of a youth hostel in Gloucester.

*Astrid afKlinteberg*, Gloucester resident, stated that she would like the community to think that zoning is not just about what can go down in the harbor area but the types of jobs that can go down there. She stated that the City needs sustainable jobs, not minimum wage jobs but jobs in fish processing or processing fish waste.

*Geoffrey Richon*, President of Gloucester Maritime Heritage Center, feels that it is really important to use whatever commercial opportunities Gloucester has to offer. He stated that Ocean Alliance at the Paint Factory will be a great outcome for Gloucester and he is happy that it is not condominiums going there. He suggested to the community that the commercial aspect of Gloucester Harbor is the most important thing for the community.

*Robert Henriques*, Annisquam resident of ten years, stated that he has been on the waiting list for a mooring for ten years. He stated that this effort is a very good move and he believes that the harbor needs to be mixed-use. He stated that commercial and recreational boating can be very happy together. He stated that adding more moorings would be a great improvement. He stated that Gloucester needs to create a mooring field with cash flow for the City,

*John Feener*, resident of Gloucester, stated that he wants to see Gloucester survive and be a viable community. He believes that revitalizing the harbor is a key ingredient to success in the City. He stated that he would like to make sure that commercial piers and usage will be left the way they are through any changes. He stated that he would like to see the public walkway started before buildings get put up because once the buildings go up and people start making money they are going to say they don't have enough money to contribute to the boardwalk.

**COMMUNITY FORUM, CON'T-**

*Richard Novak* stated that he has lived in Gloucester all his life but has since moved to Florida. He stated that he still has a mooring in Gloucester and comes back to the City and rents. He stated that people come to Gloucester by two ways, the Cut Bridge, which is inadequate or the Route 128 bridge, which does not have a high capacity. He stated that East Main Street and Rogers Street are both very limited. He stated that there is a big parking issue in Gloucester. He stated that if Gloucester wants to do anything at all in terms of construction there should be a parking garage somewhere.

*Scott Williams*, resident of Gloucester and waterfront business owner, stated that he hasn't seen anything commercial only recreation and shops. He stated that he has traffic concerns. He stated that the last Mayor talked about working with NOAA and the fishermen. He stated that he wonders if there is any grant money from the government for harbor rejuvenation. He stated that in his business no one asks him where they can get a sandwich; they ask him about the waterfront or the heritage of the City.

*Evangela King*, four year resident of Gloucester, stated that she has been boating in Essex her entire life. She stated that what she would like to see is dockage where you can dock your boat for a few hours and go to dinner or possibly stay overnight. There should be some type of public dockage so families from other parts of the State can enjoy Gloucester.

*Dave Murray*, resident of Gloucester, stated that the harbor serves one basic purpose. He stated the people in the 1600's did not come to Gloucester for the farmlands, they came for the fishing. He states harbors involve boats and going ashore. He stated that right now the harbor is encircled with a lot of decrepit buildings and rotten pilings. We need to get over our fearfulness. We don't need to fix a path for 100 years, we can keep it flexible. He stated that nobody is going to put money into the waterfront until the people know where the City is going. He stated that the City needs to figure out what its long-term goal is.

*Val Gilman*, Gloucester resident of thirty-eight years, stated that public dockage is an excellent idea for the Gloucester Harbor. She suggested that a cobblestone walkway leading visiting recreational boaters up to the Maritime Heritage Center with some maps to navigate around the waterfront would be great. She stated that people could donate a cobblestone. She stated that parts of the City are beautiful and there should be a small walkway connecting these parts of the City together. She suggested that tours should be offered on commercial fishing boats.

*John Beck*, Gloucester resident of seventeen years, stated that he has operated a commercial, international freight service for a small vessel out of Miami Dade Metro Park. He stated that this is the ultimate in commercial and recreational integration. He stated that he would like the panel to be sensitive to thinking about things such as trucks, forklifts and pallet jacks where you are not going to interrupt the recreational use. He stated that recreational and commercial does work but encouraged the panel to get information from those commercial boaters who would actually have to move things around.

*Janine Fritz*, Gloucester resident of thirty-one years, stated that she and her husband think that Gloucester is the most beautiful place in the world. She feels that there is so much potential for the City. She stated that marketing the seaport of Gloucester could be a year-round thing. She stated that on Nantucket they have Christmas walks and year-round tourism.

*Paul Gilman*, stated that he would like to see some cultural things going on at the waterfront. He stated that in Newburyport they have a big open area with bands playing. He stated that the Harbor Loop Concerts are really nice.

**COMMUNITY FORUM, CONT-**

*Joyce Burkett*, Gloucester resident of three years, stated that she owns property on East Main Street. She stated that she has watched the harbor for some time and she sees that there is not much activity and she sees the crumbling piers. She stated that she knows that in the DPA there are not a lot of benefits and the rules are very rigid and there are conflicts between some of the State agencies. She stated that she is in favor of recreational use within the harbor. She stated that the City should add more moorings. She stated that if the waterfront was more inviting the City would have more opportunities for artists and that would feed into the development of a lively city. She stated that the City needs some mechanism where if there is the commercial need for more space on the waterfront that the private owners have a financial incentive.

*Colin Kennedy*, Annisquam summer resident, stated that he resides in Houston, Texas, which is the second largest port in the United States. He stated that he is originally from Buffalo, New York, which had a port and now has half the population that it had when he was growing up and it continues to decline. He stated that it ought to be easier to find out about Gloucester's art heritage, and be able to find the actual views painted by people such as Hopper, Sloane, Hopkinson and many more. He stated that the art heritage of Gloucester's port is incredible.

*Deacon Banks*, recreational boater, stated that he is not going to ask for recreational boating. He stated that the moorings are underutilized and the City should add moorings and organize the existing moorings. He stated that he would like to see more services for people who come by boat. He stated that the City should have public dockage but boaters are not going to come into the harbor if they cannot dump their trash, get water or take a shower.

*Lynn Parisi*, tourism professional on Cape Ann, stated that the City needs to add more moorings. She stated that she feels strongly that there should be a waterfront hotel. She stated that what Gloucester has is the real deal and that is Gloucester's draw. She stated that Gloucester's draw is everything that goes on at the waterfront. She stated that tourism is not bad, tourism brings in money.

*Victoria Williams*, Lanesville resident stated that no matter what happens to Gloucester one thing that the City should hold dear is waterfront access for the public, for the community and for tourism. She stated that the place and space of the harbor is beautiful. She stated that the City needs to keep in mind private-property owners' rights. She stated that she lived in Malibu and you can go for twenty miles without seeing the ocean because the public has no access. She stated that Rockport has a great idea with lots of community paths down to the ocean. She stated that she loves the diversity of the Gloucester community.

*Veronica Morgan*, Gloucester resident, stated that her goal for Gloucester is to see a very good art school or at least a summer art school in Gloucester. She stated she had a meeting with the Dean of the Museum School and they were very interested in Gloucester. She stated that Mass Art has also expressed interest in Gloucester as a potential facility site. She stated that Gloucester should be competing with Provincetown. She stated that Gloucester should have a major art colony. She recommended that the community read a book entitled "Making the Impossible, Possible" by William Strickland.

*John Moscol*, Gloucester resident of seventeen years, stated that the community forums are a great idea and he hopes that there is some action that comes out of these forums as opposed to just another waterfront study. We are in regulatory muck.

**COMMUNITY FORUM, CON'T-**

*Jeff Marston*, summer resident, stated that the panel should consider activities in terms of finding the City's competitive advantage. He stated that Gloucester is not in the middle of anything they are on the edge. He stated that Gloucester may be the closest port to some of the greatest fishing in the world. He stated that a harbor requires land to be a harbor and the land around Gloucester's harbor is old, appealing, compact and historic for a great number of people who are willing to travel. He stated that the land is also great for professionals who want to have an accounting practice, law practice or such in a loft building.

*Philip Bolger*, Gloucester resident of eighty years, stated that he has seen a lot of ups and downs in the harbor and has seen various attempts to try to change parts of it, not all of which have worked out very well. He stated that the fishing industry is going to come back. He suggested that the city not water down the harbor front. He stated that Gloucester has a viable future in fish and boat building. He stated that if Gloucester is the last fishing port standing then the harbor is going to need all the space to accommodate boats from the other ports. He stated that any plan in the harbor should be looked at skeptically and slowly.

*Susanne Altenburger*, resident of Gloucester, stated that since 1978 Gloucester has been designated as a marine industrial port. She stated that the State is interested in preserving the last few places where you can do fishing, where you can dock fishing vessels, where you can take out cruise ships, where you can do servicing of LNG platforms and where you can do marine and industrial trade. She stated that the State allows every property owner on the waterfront a long list of options as to what they can do with their property, as long as it is subject to certain key provisions as outlined. She stated that the harbor front property owners refer to themselves as a uniform group but it is by no means a unified group, there are quite a few property owners that are doing well following Massachusetts's law. She stated that membership in the marine industrial park is voluntary and if people have no luck making money they should consider selling or finding another way to make money. She stated that creating jobs and keeping jobs in Gloucester should be a priority. She stated you can only build large vessels on the water, and long, lean vessels push easier through the water, and ninety-seven percent of the current fishing fleet were built nowhere near Cape Ann.

*Valerie Nelson*, Gloucester resident, stated that she was struck by a woman, Molly Lutcavage, who spoke at the first community forum, on research coming into Gloucester. She stated that she spoke to Ms. Lutcavage after the forum and she stated that not only would her research lab be interested in Gloucester, but also the Boston Aquarium is looking to relocate. She stated that research is missing from the conversation and the community should ask, "What kind of jobs do I want my children to have?" She stated that there are all kinds of new opportunities such as Mr. Bolger's innovative boat design that will save fifty percent on energy use and the University of New Hampshire Research Lab. She stated that South Dartmouth has received money for years from the State and Federal government to invest in high tech research. She stated that they need to look at how they can get the Federal and State government to support the very best in jobs that are consistent with a working waterfront and with the varied traditions, history and skills that the City has.

*Patty Paige*, Administrator for the Gloucester High School Sailing Team, stated that they are in their third year of operation. She stated that they have Gloucester and Rockport students involved in the program. She stated that they are part of the Mass Bay League in Boston. She stated that 95% of students in the sailing program go on to colleges. She stated that the benefit of this is that students learn sailing and learn respect and proper use of the harbor. She stated that this program can lead to community boating. She stated that private funding can be obtained to support the project. She would like the City to consider that the program needs a home facility with storage and bathroom facilities. She stated that the City needs to look at some ordinances when thinking of mixed-use throughout the harbor, such as the ordinance in the Fort area that states you cannot use City streets to park or load forklifts between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.

**COMMUNITY FORUM, CON'T-**

*Carmine Gorga* stated that he agrees with Mr. Bolger and his initiative to build boats that are "green". He stated that he agrees with maintaining the marine industry in Gloucester and providing steady jobs. He stated that the City Council can ask the City Treasurer to go to the Federal Reserve System and discount paper for any public work problem.

*Martin Stephan*, stated that he grew up in Topsfield and was the first African-American ever to win an America's Cup in 1992. He stated that he would like to open a community sailing center in Gloucester in the Stage Fort Park area. He stated that he has been involved with the community sailing center in Portland, Maine. He stated that he has investors to back his project but needs a place on the water to open a center. He stated that a community sailing center would be beneficial to the children as well as the adults of the community and would add to the beautification of Gloucester's Harbor. He stated that they would offer sailing for students for one dollar and adult membership for three hundred dollars.

*Jack Levie*, harbor property owner, stated that the waterfront owners are not looking to put up condominiums, they are just looking to relieve some of the burden of the regulations they have so they can become profitable. He stated that fishermen can only fish twenty-eight days a year and no one wants to invest money into a business like that. He stated that they plan to do business on the upper floors and increase the commercial fishing dockage. He stated that if they can revitalize their own buildings, they can revitalize downtown Gloucester. He stated that he would like to see some money go back to the schools.

*Eric Bornhofft*, resident of Annisquam, stated that a large group of very dedicated, very knowledge residents have been meeting for about two years, and from listening to them regarding the problems they have had developing their property, the City has to recognize there is a zoning problem. He stated the DPA restricts public access to the waterfront, so the City is going to have to work very hard because it is a complex issue.

*Sarah Buck*, Community Development Director, thanked the community and the panel for attending the forum. She stated that they are moving rapidly and pointed out that attached to the forum's agenda is a schedule that informs residents what the next steps are and when the local zoning and the draft harbor plan are going to City Council for public hearing. She stated that if someone was not able to speak at one of the forums they can post comments at the City's website. She stated that mixing all of the community voices together will help the city to come up with a better plan.

Respectfully submitted,

Bobbi Orlando